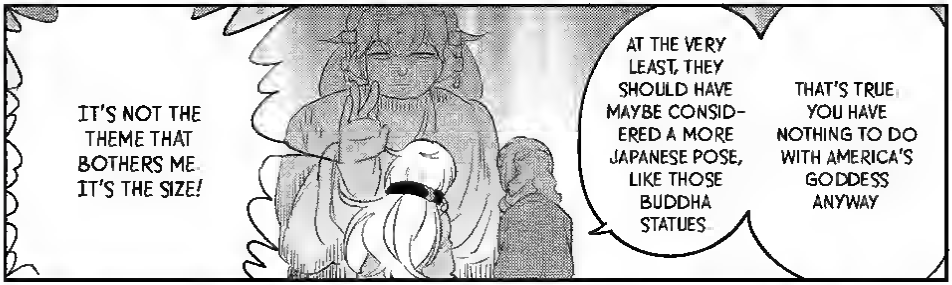
Takahashi-san
is listening.
高橋さんが聞いている。

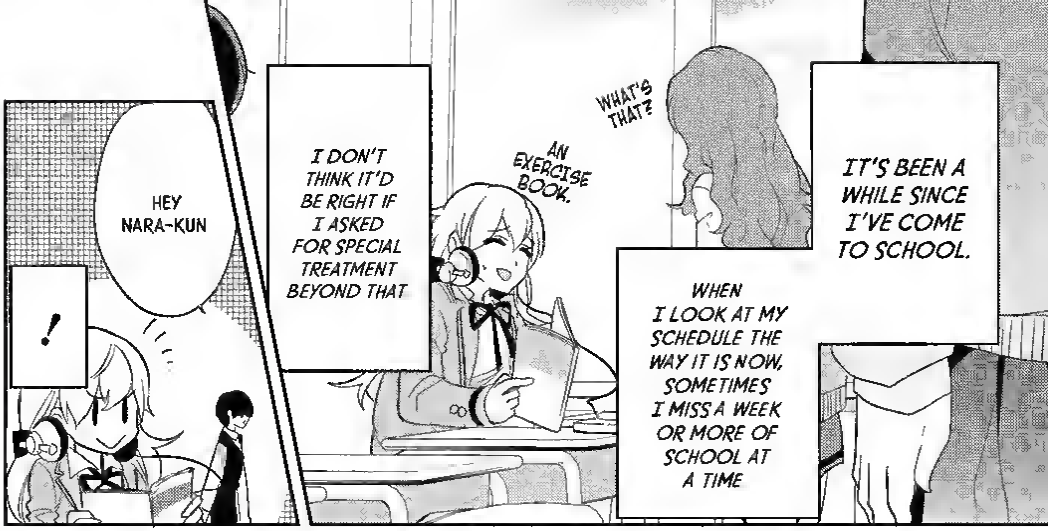
WHOOOSH
CROSS CONTINENTAL? SPACE? A GODDESS STATUE?
I'LL HAVE TO ASK HER WHAT SHE THINKS.
CHAPTER 59
BETTER BIG THAN TOO SMALL
SAEJIMA IS HAVING ANOTHER LONG PHONE CALL...
OH, THEY'RE JUST WORK REQUESTS...
THEY'RE ALL FROM THE SAME PERSON, THOUGH
YOU'VE GOT SOME GOOD PROPOSITIONS HEADING YOUR WAY
THAT BIG? WHAT IS IT?
IT WOULD MEAN THAT...
...YOU WOULD HAVE TO DEVOTE YOURSELF TO IT FOR A WHILE.
IT'S JUST THAT HE WANTS YOU ON SUCH A BIG PROJECT.

SO YOU ACTUALLY WANT THEM TO BUILD ONE?
A GODDESS STATUE USING YOU AS THE MODEL IN AMERICA, THAT IS
I ABSOLUTELY DON'T WANT TO DO THAT! THAT'S JUST LIKE A GIANT FIGURE PROJECT!


THAT'S TRUE. YOU HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH AMERICA'S GODDESS ANYWAY
AT THE VERY LEAST, THEY SHOULD HAVE MAYBE CONSIDERED A MORE JAPANESE POSE, LIKE THOSE BUDDHA STATUES
IT'S NOT THE THEME THAT BOTHERS ME. IT'S THE SIZE!

HONESTLY, I'M HONORED THEY CONSIDERED ME,
BUT THEY SHOULD KNOW THAT BIGGER ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER
GOOD-NESS, I FEEL THE SAME WAY
I'M NOT JUST TALKING ABOUT THE PHYSI-CAL HERE
YOU TURNING INTO SOME BIG STAR
WOULD RUN CONTRARY TO YOUR OWN NATURAL TALENTS AS AN IDOL
OR AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT I THINK.

I LIKE YOU AS YOU ARE NOW.
YOU'RE NOT SO HUGE YET THAT YOU CAN'T ENJOY A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR FANS.
IT'S LIKE YOU CAN TRULY BE FRIENDS WITH THEM. THEY LOVE YOU FOR IT.
S-STOP IT, SAEJIMA! YOU'RE MAKING ME BLUSH.
BUT YOU'RE RIGHT. I THINK WHERE I AM RIGHT NOW SUITS ME BEST.
HEE HEE.
BUT, ENA, IF YOU. .
WHOOOSH
SAEJIMA IS SO RELIABLE.
I COULDN'T ASK FOR A BETTER PRODUCER.

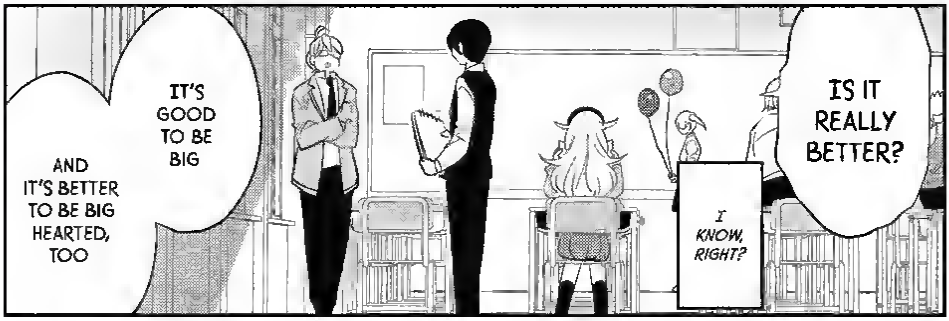

IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE COME TO SCHOOL.
WHEN I LOOK AT MY SCHEDULE THE WAY IT IS NOW, SOMETIMES I MISS A WEEK OR MORE OF SCHOOL AT A TIME
WHAT'S THAT?
AN EXERCISE BOOK.
I DON'T THINK IT'D BE RIGHT IF I ASKED FOR SPECIAL TREATMENT BEYOND THAT
HEY NARA-KUN
!

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I HAD A CHANCE TO EAVESDROP
ALL RIGHT/ I'LL JUST SETTLE RIGHT IN HERE UNNOTICED.
MIKAGE?

I JUST SORT OF HAPPENED TO OVERHEAR THEM...
PLUMP
...TALKING...

I DIDN'T EXPECT THAT CHUBBY GUY TO SHOW UP.
WAIT, THAT'S NARA-KUN.
NARA-KUN, YOU'RE STARTING TO LOOK VERY STATELY.
WHAT'S THAT? IS THAT SUPPOSED TO BE AN INSULT?
WHPH.
YEAH, THAT'S DEFINITELY NARA-KUN'S VOICE.
NO, I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANYTHING WRONG WITH IT.
I FELL VICTIM TO A LIMITED TIME OFFER SALE ON SWEETS
I DO ADMIT THAT I MAY HAVE EATEN TOO MANY.
HOW MANY DID YOU EAT?!
WAY TOO MANY TO GET THAT BIG IN JUST A WEEK!
WELL, ALL I DO IS EAVESDROP SO I GUESS IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER TO ME.
MAYBE YOU SHOULD DO THAT THING.
YOU KNOW THOSE COMMERCIALS "GET IN SHAPE IN JUST TWO MONTHS!"
HMM...
YEAH, I'D LIKE THAT. IT DOES KIND OF BOTHER ME, AFTER ALL.
POW
POW
POW
POW
THAT ISN'T A BAD IDEA.
HOWEVER, HERE IN JAPAN, WE HAVE THAT OLD SAYING...

BETTER BIG THAN TOO SMALL!
THAT'S TRUE, BUT STILL...
LISTENING


IS IT REALLY BETTER?
I KNOW, RIGHT?
IT'S GOOD TO BE BIG
AND IT'S BETTER TO BE BIG HEARTED, TOO

BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY I'M ABSOLUTELY NOT SAYING THAT TO JUSTIFY ME EATING A LOT OF SWEETS
I FIND THAT TO SOUND A BIT DUBIOUS
I'VE JUST RECENTLY LEARNED TO APPRECIATE SUCH PROVERBIAL WISDOM
I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, NARA-KUN, BUT CONSIDER THIS...

LET'S SAY YOU'RE THIRSTY.
WOULD YOU RATHER DRINK WATER FROM A CUP...
...OR FROM A BUCKET?
WOULDN'T YOU NORMALLY GO FOR A CUP?
THAT'S RIGHT! AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT I WANT TO SAY...
THERE'S SUCH A THING AS THE RIGHT SIZE FOR THE JOB
DRINKING FROM A BUCKET WOULD MAKE YOU NO BETTER THAN A HIPPOPOTAMUS AT THE ZOO.
I THINK IT'S BEST TO RETAIN A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF HUMAN DIGNITY.
NOW YOU'VE GONE TOO FAR. THAT EXTRAPOLATION'S A BIT EXTRAORDINARY!
HA! HOW NAIVE OF YOU, MIKAGE.
THAT'S EVEN MORE NAIVE THAN THINKING ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS LIKE ASPARTAME WILL SOLVE YOUR PROBLEMS!
TRYING TO CUT BACK ON CALORIES, HUH?
WHAT WOULD YOU CHOOSE BETWEEN THE TWO?
IF GIVEN THE CHOICE, EVERYONE WOULD PICK THE BUCKET!
HUH? I'M PRETTY SURE THAT'S NOT TRUE.
I MEAN, RIGHT HERE RIGHT NOW, NEITHER MIKAGE-KUN OR I WOULD

IF YOU ASKED ANYONE WHO WAS ABOUT TO FAINT FROM DEHYDRATION IN THE DESERT WHICH THEY'D PREFER,
THEY WOULD PICK THE BUCKET EVERY TIME!
THAT'S A REALLY SMALL TARGET AUDIENCE.
EVEN I MIGHT CHOOSE A BUCKET IN THAT SITUATION
HOW MYSTERIOUS I WAS SO SURE ABOUT THE CUP UNTIL NOW!
WELL, UNDER THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT'S A GIVEN
I FEEL SO STRONGLY ABOUT IT NOW
TOMORROW, I MUST SEND A LETTER OF THANKS TO THE INVENTOR OF BUCKETS
DID YOU JUST SAY INVENTOR OF BUCKETS?
A TUB WOULD BE EVEN BETTER THEN YOU COULD WASH YOURSELF
THE INVENTOR OF TUBS IS SUCH A RELIABLE GUY!
NOW THE INVENTOR OF TUBS?

NO, WAIT A SEC
AREN'T THOSE SITUATIONS PRETTY RARE CASES?
ASK ANYONE HERE THEY'D AGREE WITH YOU
WHAT ABOUT OTHER SITUATIONS?
LIKE, SAY...
...WHEN YOU HAVE A PET
WE HAVE A HAMSTER...
SQUEAK!
...AND WE HAVE A CAPYBARA
BOOM!
NORMALLY, YOU WOULD ONLY KEEP THE HAMSTER AS A PET
OH, I GET IT! THEY'RE BOTH RODENTS GOOD ONE!
CAPYBARA ARE CUTE, BUT THEY'RE TOO BIG TO KEEP AS PETS
HAMSTERS ARE SMALL, BUT THEY'RE PERFECT FOR PETS
ON THE OTHER HAND, CAPYBARA GAZE AT YOU WITH EYES FULL OF LOVE AND TOLERANCE,
ALMOST THE WAY A MOTHER LOOKS AT HER CHILD.
IT'S AS THOUGH THE HUMAN IS THE ONE THAT BECOMES THE PET.
AND AS I SAID, I THINK IT'S BEST TO RETAIN A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF HUMAN DIGNITY
WHY DO YOUR EXAMPLES KEEP GETTING MORE EXTRAVAGANT THAN NECESSARY?
HA HA HA, MIKAGE!
IF YOU ASK ME, I THINK THAT ONLY MEANS THAT WE SHOULD ALL HAVE CAPYBARA

LIKE I SAID, YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE IS WAY TOO SMALL!
IF YOU ASKED ANY BREEDER AT A ZOO THAT'S GOING OUT OF BUSINESS,
THEY'D ALL SAY...
THEY PREFER CAPYBARA!
UGH
HAMSTERS ARE CUTE
BUT NO CUSTOMER COMES JUST FOR HAMSTERS
RIGHT

I THINK THOSE ZOOKEEPERS ARE DEPENDING WAY TOO MUCH ON THE CAPYBARA
I'M SURE SUCH A ZOO WOULD GO OUT OF BUSINESS NO MATTER WHAT THEY DID!
FEVER
IT COULD BE CAPYBARA FEVER, WITH LIVE SHOWS ALL HOURS OF THE DAY!
CUSTOMERS LOVE CAPYBARA! DAY OR NIGHT!
AND WHAT OF CAPYBARA?
UGH

I THINK MAYBE YOU SHOULD THINK ABOUT THIS IN SIMPLER TERMS.
MAYBE NOTHING COMES FROM MAINTAINING A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF HUMAN DIGNITY
HMM, I'M STARTING TO FEEL LIKE BIGGER IS ALWAYS BETTER
I COULD SIP WATER FROM A BUCKET, AND I COULD BE UNDER THE CONTROL OF A CAPYBARA
THAT'S A PRETTY EXTREME EXAMPLE!
IF THOSE WERE YOUR ONLY OPTIONS, THEN WHAT?
LET'S SAY IT WAS SUMMER RIGHT NOW
BESIDES, THE BUCKET AND CAPYBARA EXAMPLES AREN'T EVEN THAT BIG
OR A HAT-SHAPED, ADAMSKI-LIKE UFO?
A STRAW HAT?
WHAT WOULD YOU USE TO AVOID DIRECT CONTACT WITH UV RAYS?
?!
M-MIKAGE
THAT'S EXACTLY WHEN YOU'D SURELY HAVE TO RELY ON THE UFO!
BACK TO DIGNITY AGAIN!
WOULD MEAN THROWING AWAY ALL YOUR DIGNITY AS A HUMAN BEING
RELYING ON SOME STRANGE UFO
NORMALLY YOU'D PICK A HAT, RIGHT?

キャアアアア…
GYAAAAA!
ウゥアアア…
I MEAN, WE'RE TALKING ABOUT ULTRA-VIOLENT RAYS, RIGHT?
THAT'S NO TIME TO THINK OF YOUR PRIDE!
YOU'D HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO RUN TO THE UFO FOR HELP
THAT'S NOT AT ALL THE KIND OF RAY YOU'D HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT.

WHAT?! THERE ARE ULTRA-VIOLENT RAYS GOING AROUND?
I DID?!
ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU JUST SAID?
CAN'T YOU TELL HE MIS-UNDERSTOOD YOU?
MAYBE THE UFOS CAME TO HELP US
WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU? YOUR LIFE OR YOUR DIGNITY?
I CAN'T KEEP UP THIS IS WAY OUT OF MY LEAGUE
UGH...
しくしく

I WONDER...
FROM BUCKETS TO CAPYBARA TO UFOS. AM I RIGHT?
GIVE IT UP BIGGER IS ALWAYS BETTER.
BUT MY DIGNITY HMM
IT'D BE BETTER THAN DYING
NO, MY DIGNITY
IN THE NOT-SO-DISTANT PAST, WE ALL PURCHASED TINY SMARTPHONES
NOW WE'VE SEEN THE LIGHT AND WANT BIG PHONES WITH BIG SCREENS
WE HAVE BIG ROBOT ANIME MADE EVERY YEAR,
BUT I DON'T EVER REMEMBER A MICRO ROBOT ANIME
ESSENTIALLY, HUMANKIND THINKS...
THAT BIGGER THINGS ARE MORE CONVENIENT THAT'S WHY WE LIKE THEM MORE
AND...

...ARE WE OURSELVES EXEMPT FROM THAT LOGIC?
WE ARE BEINGS THAT EXCEL AT DEMANDING MORE AND MORE!
THAT'S RIGHT. I WANT TO BE A MAN THAT LIVES BY THE SAYING, "BETTER BIG THAN TOO SMALL."
I WANT TO LIVE EMBRACING THAT TO THE FULLEST!
EXCEL ...?
ALL OF MY FANS...
THEY'RE ALWAYS CHEERING ME ON TO TRY HARDER
YEAHH!
IF I HAD A BIGGER HEART, I COULD TRULY EXCEL AT MY JOB AND ENCOURAGE THEM MORE TOO.
LISTENING
IS THAT NOT THE NATURE OF A TRUE ICON?

I HAVE TO BE AN EVEN BIGGER IDOL!
NARA-KUN, YOU WIN TODAY
HA!
GASUU
HUH? YOU DROPPED SOMETHING, NARA-KUN
SO YOU REALLY WERE WORRIED ABOUT IT
WELL, YEAH
IT'S BAD FOR MY HEALTH, AFTER ALL
I WANT TO BE AN EVEN BIGGER AND BETTER PERSON THAN I AM NOW!
HUH? YOU WANT TO ACCEPT THE OFFER?
I DO!
I SEE.
I KNEW IT. YOU'RE ON THE PATH TO BEING A HUGE STAR, ENA!

WITH THAT SETTLED, I HOPE I HAVE YOUR COOPERATION IN--
THEN THIS IS GOODBYE, ENA.
BUT THIS IS THE PATH YOU'VE CHOSEN IT'S FOR THE BEST
IT'S HARD TO DO THIS
キョロキョロ GLANCE GLANCE
HUH?
WHAT?
TRANSFER ?
WHAT SHE SAID THAT NIGHT?
REMEMBER WHAT I SAID THAT NIGHT?
IF YOU WANT TO ACCEPT THIS JOB AND BECOME A BIG STAR...
YOU'LL NEED TO TRANSFER ELSEWHERE.

OH! I COULDN'T HEAR HER BECAUSE OF THE TRAIN!
WHOOOSH
SO BACK THEN, WHEN SAEJIMA WAS ON THE PHONE,
SHE WASN'T TALKING ABOUT DETAILS ABOUT THE JOB...
BUT ABOUT MY TRANSFER?
W-WAIT A SECOND
WE MIGHT NOT HAVE THE SAME GOALS BUT--
SCREECH
THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH, ENA-SAN!
H-HUH?!
A LIMO?
IT HAS BEEN TOO LONG, ENA-SAN.
OH, YOU'RE THAT CELEB I MET A WHILE BACK
I'M THE OWNER OF YOUR NEW AGENCY MY NAME IS AMEKARI!
DON'T TELL ME, YOU'RE THE...
UMM...
I'M VERY HAPPY YOU ACCEPTED OUR REQUEST TO TRANSFER TO OUR COMPANY
FIRST OFF, I'M SURE THIS WON'T BE A BIG DEAL TO YOU, BUT...

SAEJIMA! I DON'T WANT ANY OF---
ISN'T THIS GREAT, ENA? YOU'VE BECOME A HUGE SUCCESS
I HAVEN'T BECOME ANYTHING YET!
WHA ?!
I'M SURE YOU'LL SEE THE CHANGE IN LIFESTYLE STARTING AS SOON AS TOMORROW
I'D LIKE TO INFORM YOU THAT I'VE PREPARED THIRTY PEOPLE TO BE ON YOUR PRODUCER STAFF!
SURPRISE!
ABOUT BEING A TRUE FRIEND TO YOUR FANS WAS JUST AN EXCUSE
ALL THAT STUFF I SAID
SAEJIMA
I KNEW I COULDN'T SUPPORT YOU ON YOUR JOURNEY TO THE TOP
IN TRUTH, I ALREADY KNEW
I KNEW I DIDN'T HAVE WHAT IT TOOK FOR YOU TO SPREAD YOUR WINGS

ZOOM
HOLY COW, SHE'S FAST!
FAREWELL!
WAIT! DON'T GO, SAEJIMA...
FWIP
ANY MORE OF THIS TALK AND I'LL START TO REGRET MY DECISION
HUH?
ENA-SAN, I KNOW PARTING WAYS IS MOST DIFFICULT
I... I NEVER WANTED THIS.
I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN WATCHING YOU FROM AFAR.
HOWEVER, NOW IS NOT THE TIME FOR IDLE REFLEC-TION!
COME WITH ME AND I'LL MAKE YOU A BIG STAR.
MARK MY WORDS
HUH?
ALWAYS? REALLY?
!

BUT I HAVE SAEJIMA!
I'M SURE SHE'LL KEEP WATCH OVER YOU FROM AFAR
SO FOR HER SAKE AS WELL AS YOURS
BECOME A STAR SO BIG THAT YOU'LL SHAKE THE HEAVENS!
WITH ALL MY MONEY AND ALL YOUR CHARM, IT SHOULD BE EASY!
ALL OF A SUDDEN, IT LOOKS LIKE I'M IN OVER MY HEAD!
ENA, DO YOUR BEST!
SHE-AH

English Digital Edition
Chapter 059

Takahashi-san is listening.
高橋さんが聞いている。
Yu Hokuo

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